

HEPATITIS A, ACUTE

Hepatitis A is an illness caused by the hepatitis A virus. It is characterized by abrupt onset of fever, malaise, nausea, abdominal discomfort, and fatigue, followed within a few days by jaundice. Severity of illness is highly variable and can be mild or asymptomatic in young children. Severity varies from person to person, but the mortality rate is low, ranging from 0.1% to 0.3%. The virus is transmitted person to person by the fecal-oral route. Poor environmental sanitation, poor personal hygiene, and close personal contact promote transmission. Transmission occurs sporadically in daycare centers. Common source outbreaks have been related to contaminated water, food contaminated by infected food handlers, raw and undercooked mollusks taken from contaminated water, and contaminated produce.

Laboratory Criteria for Confirmation:

- IgM anti-HAV positive serology

Case Confirmation

Confirmed: A case that meets the clinical case definition and is laboratory confirmed or, for hepatitis A, a case that meets the clinical case definition and occurs in a person who has an epidemiologic link with a person who has laboratory-confirmed hepatitis A (i.e., household, daycare or sexual contact with an infected person during the 15-50 days before the onset of symptoms).

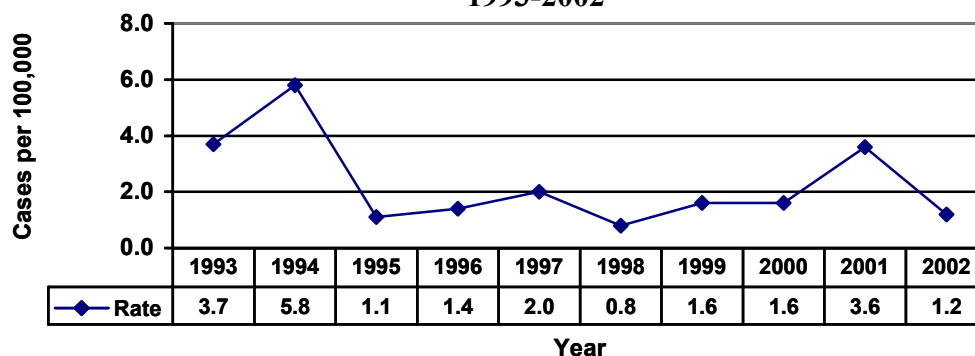
Epidemiology

Kentucky 2002		Rate per 100,000	U.S. Rate (2001) per 100,000
Cases	47	1.2	3.77

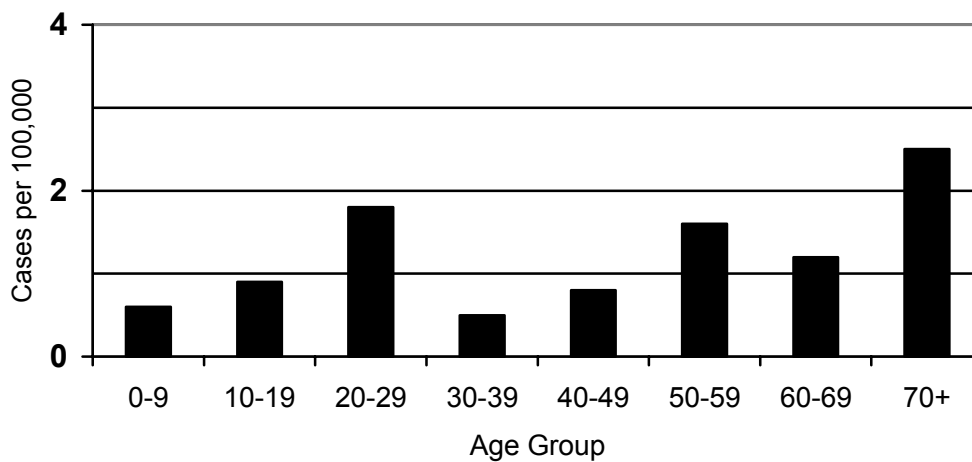
Cases by Gender

Female	27	1.3
Male	20	1.0

**Hepatitis A Incidence, Kentucky
1993-2002**

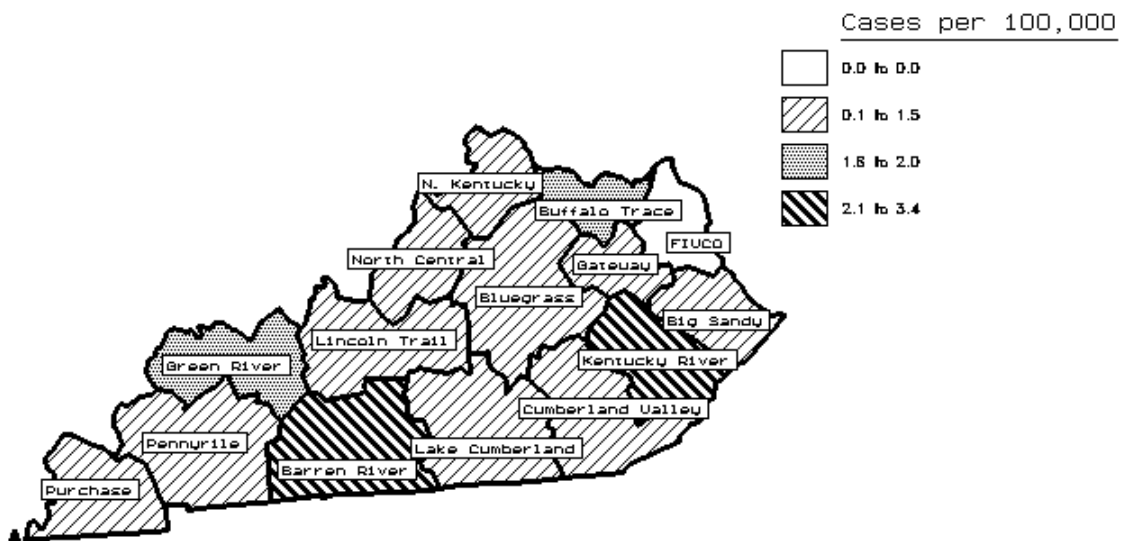


Hepatitis A, Age Specific Incidence, Kentucky 2002



Nine cases were in persons over 74 years of age and the 70+ age group did have the highest incidence by age.

Hepatitis A Incidence by District, Kentucky 2002



The Barren River District experienced the highest incidence at 3.4 cases per 100,000, followed by the Kentucky River District at 2.5 cases per 100,000. Only six cases were considered to be outbreak associated in 2002.